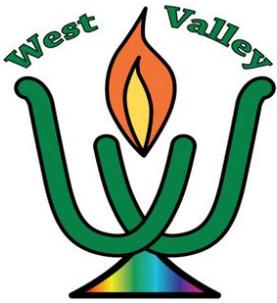


WVUU Times

April 2020

West Valley Unitarian Universalist Church



WEST VALLEY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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- How am I getting outside today?
- How am I moving my body today?
- What beauty am I either creating, cultivating, or inviting?

I've been writing down the answers to these questions daily in a personal blog, and I encourage you all to do the same. Especially when it comes to checking in on each other.

If you have access to and are listed in our member directory, please make a point to reach out regularly to the nine entries closest to your name at least once a week. Start by calling them and gauging their comfort level with technology and communication and maybe expand from there.

Each "care circle" might communicate in a different way, and that's okay.

I hope you're all well. And I mean that in every sense of the word. Physically, of course, but also mentally, spiritually, and emotionally. Social distancing can take its toll, so I hope you are all prioritizing self-care during this strange time.

Ron Phares shared something on Facebook that I want to share with you here. Six daily questions to ask yourself:

- What am I grateful for today?
- Who am I checking in on or connecting with today?
- What expectations of "normal" am I letting go of today?

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Sunday Services

In-person Sunday Services are cancelled.

Go to <https://soundcloud.com/user-552693741> or westvalleyuu.org for recordings of speakers' reflections.

April Theme: **The Divine/God**

April 5: **Religious Identity: A Spiritual Search**

Sharon Moore

As UUs we draw from many sources and traditions for our religious identities. But just identifying as a UU leaves out specific features of our religious essence. I'll tell you mine.

April 12: **Of God(desses) and (Wo)Men**

Rev. Cathy Corbin-Mannino

Having just celebrated Women's History Month in March, it might be interesting to look at the wisdom and strength of 23 divine feminine archetypes still playing out in real people in today's world.

April 19: **Loving Stories**

Duane Daniels

Compassion in public speaking and performing arts: the opportunity to tell a loving story.

April 26: **Religion Without God.**

Rev. Cathy Corbin-Mannino

We've heard of God Without Religion, a book by Andrew Farley and a quest taken by many people, but what about religion without god? Why bother?

Who We Are



West Valley Unitarian Universalist Church is affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association. We are a welcoming congregation whose mission is provide a safe place for celebrating diversity, drawing inspiration for living better lives, fostering social and environmental justice, and compassionately supporting each other in our spiritual searches.

We are a theologically diverse community who encourages you to seek your own spiritual path. We provide a caring environment for each adult and child to learn more about yourself and your place in the interdependent web of existence. Sunday services celebrate our community, challenge us intellectually, and engage us spiritually.



Gavel Talk

(continued from page 1)

The important thing is that we're keeping connected, letting each other know we still have the support of our community.

I look forward to the day when we can all meet again in person, but until then, take care of yourselves and each other as best you can!

WVUU Sunday Services Cancelled (reprint of March 17 emailed notice)

Dear West Valley UU congregation members and friends,

As an expression of our concern for our most vulnerable members, and to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in our communities, all worship services at WVUU will be cancelled until April 12 or pending further information from the CDC. All in-person meetings that are related to the congregation such as committee meetings will either be cancelled or moved online.

This decision was reached in consultation with local health officials, the UUA, and our congregation's board of trustees. It was not an easy call, but I am convinced it is the correct one.

The Worship Services Committee will still be coordinating with our regularly scheduled speakers to provide new weekly sermons, which you will be able to listen to at <https://soundcloud.com/user-552693741> or on our website at westvalleyuu.org, and on our Facebook page.

In the meantime, dear friends, be safe. Practice good hand-washing. Enjoy the comforts of home whenever you are able. And be in touch with any questions you might have.

With love,

Emily Whitmore, with the support of the WVUU staff and Board of Trustees



STANDING ON THE SIDE OF

LOVE

Pandemic

Lynn Ungar

March 11, 2020

First Universalist Church of Denver

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—
the most sacred of times?

Cease from travel.

Cease from buying and selling.

Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.

Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.

Center down.

And when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.

Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.

(You could hardly deny it now.)

Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.

(Surely, that has come clear.)

Do not reach out your hands.

Reach out your heart.

Reach out your words.

Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love--

for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.



March WVUUC Board Meeting Notes

Sandra Mahoney s_1mahoney@cox.net

In attendance: Emily Whitmore, Mandy Oviatt, Noel Johnson, Mark Oelerking, Sandra Mahoney, Emilie Sulkes.

Visitors: Sharon Moore, Diane D'Agostino, Roz Cook, Jim Reay.

I. Call to Order, Check-in, and Lighting of Chalice. President Emily Whitmore called to order the regular meeting of the WVUUC Board of Trustees at 12:15 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting. The minutes by Secretary Sandra Mahoney were approved as written.

III. Treasurer's Report. The report by Treasurer Mark Oelerking was approved. Mark noticed he is having difficulty with QuickBooks and has spent time, without success, with their help desk. Additionally, our current edition of the application will no longer be supported at the end of May; the updated version will cost about \$300.00.

IV. Coronavirus (COVID-19). A discussion regarding the safest course of action for our members was held. The decision was made to suspend church services until at least April 12. The UUA has recommended against gatherings of more than 25 people at this time. Other activities such as Auction events will be held at the discretion of the hosts.

A further discussion ensued with the board and the visitors about whether to continue with our podcasts (audio only), try to live-stream (audio and video), or cancel everything. If our consulting minister is

willing to record her sermons, we will continue with podcasts of her talks with an opening consisting of Lighting of the Chalice. Future speakers will be contacted as to their wishes. Sandra will let Board members know of Rev. Corbin-Mannino's decision.

A letter will be sent to members and friends immediately to inform them of these decisions [Emily]. "The church is taking care of its members by not having in-person services."

The Spring Equinox observance will occur. Since it will be outside and not have a large crowd, the Board agreed to continue with this event by the CUUPS chapter.

V. Other Reports.

a. Administration: Voting machines have been delivered and will be set up on March 16 for voting on March 17. Special cleaning will occur afterwards.

Cleaning crew is taking precautions to mitigate spread of Coronavirus; have sanitized doorknobs, light switches, piano keys, laminated song lyrics and taped song to bathroom mirrors, and sent out email to the congregation

b. Caring and Concern: Committee sent a sympathy card to Terry Mead. Diane has assisted the Williams Family (the family we helped in December) with a list of resources which included a list of food banks with addresses and times of distribution. They are a family very much in need of financial help and resources.

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Board Meeting

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c. Endowment: no committee

d. Facilities: We need to clean out the clothing collection by Monday noon. Voting equipment will be set up at 2:00 Monday. In order to create more space in the R.E. building, Sandra asked Stacy last week to remove whatever items were donated for immigrants.

Noel has received a second bid for the new heat pump/AC units for the RE building. The second bid is \$14,500.

f. Leadership: No report received.

g. Long Range Planning: See above regarding the new estimate for cooling R.E. building.

h. Membership: No report received.

i. Newsletter: Reminder that the editor will be ending his term in August, and a replacement is needed. Discussion of alternatives such as e-mail blasts, on-line newsletter, etc. No decisions made. Emily will contact David about what is needed to organize the articles for the newsletter.

j. Religious Education: Mandy decided to cancel further R.E. classes in light of coronavirus information.

k. Social Action: No report received.

l. Stewardship: Suspended auction activities until church services resume. Hosts will decide if they should postpone their scheduled activities.

m. Technology: Pax is contracting with someone to move all items from old website to new one (WestValleyUU.org). Site is still not secure.

n. Worship Services: Worship associates will assist with recording sermons by speakers as needed.

VI. Old Business

a. Clipboard auction update: Suspended auction activities until church services resume. Hosts will decide if they should postpone their scheduled activities. Have raised \$175 thus far.

b. Clothing drive: Emily is dropping off bags of donated clothing to Savers today.

c. CUUPS: A spring equinox celebration will be held.

VI. New Business

a. Pledge Drive: Jim Reay has agreed to conduct the drive and wants to do it all himself. He will email people and follow up with a phone call as needed. He will meet with congregants if they wish. He does not want to follow the UUA guidelines with suggested fair share amounts.

He does not want to include the capital fund donations as part of the fund drive. Jim went over the directory with the board but will need to consult with Terry regarding current members and members who have left. There will not be scholarships offered.

b. Signs for all gender bathrooms: Emily has purchased the signs she wants for the sanctuary and will place those there soon.

VIII. Closing: Meeting was adjourned at 1:25 PM. Next meeting scheduled for 4/19/20.

Getting to Know Burt Neiman

Sandra Mahoney s_1mahoney@cox.net

Burt Neiman is a new member of our congregation who was reared in the Denver metropolitan area and graduated from Colorado College. After completing his degree, he served in the Peace Corps for four years, living with a family in Botswana near the Kalahari Game Preserve. After returning to the U.S., he was accepted to the School for International Training in Vermont and earned a master's degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

With over 30 years of experience as a teacher, Burt had many successes; he is most proud that he and a colleague wrote and received a \$400,000 seed grant for the Redwoods Family Resource Center which provides wrap-around services for students

and their families. He has studied Spanish for many years and is able to communicate with the Spanish-speaking parents of children he has taught.



Before relocating to Phoenix, he took a year off and returned to the Loveland, Colorado area where he was a volunteer tutor in math and reading as well as in a literacy program for preschoolers at the local library. He currently teaches at BASIS Phoenix South Primary school.

Burt's mother was a Presbyterian and took him to church weekly. She remained a

loyal member of her church, but Burt noticed their theology became less accepting over the years, so he searched for something different. A friend suggested he might be a Unitarian Universalist, and he read our Mission Statement and Covenant and has been attending WVUUC for several months now.

While growing up Burt was a competitive swimmer and still swims for exercise. He loves hiking with his Golden Retriever as well as reading and playing his cello. Burt chose to relocate to Phoenix because he wanted to leave California but still be close enough to visit his son who lives in Los Angeles.



Hospitality

Sharon Moore leadmoore@gmail.com

Hospitality Shout Out

Well, we had a truncated month for church services and for Hospitality Hour. However, for the days we did meet we need to express gratitude to all those involved.

Thanks so much to hosts Roz Cook, Kay Vogt, Morgan Oviatt, David Moore, and Theresa Reigadas. Awesome job!

And our food providers did a wonderful job of nourishing our bodies! Thanks to Roz Cook, Sandra Mahoney, Ann Harper, Joy Bowen, Kay Vogt, Jeannette Morgan for your delicious offerings. Sundays wouldn't be the same without your help!

Hospitality Changes

Several changes are in the offing as Hospitality re-opens once church services resume. We are a small congregation, and it has become more and more of a challenge to feed 40-ish people on most Sundays. Finding people willing to sign up to bring food is getting harder and harder.

Hospitality is going to try something different once we are back together:

We will ask people to sign up to bring entrees and desserts as usual, but salad and bread will be provided by the Hospitality committee out of funds donated by those who enjoy our meals. That way, the entrée providers will have less to be responsible for.

Feeding 40 people can get expensive. By supplementing the entrée, we hope to make the food go further.

Additionally, Hospitality will provide, one Sunday a month, the entire lunch so that we only need volunteer food providers for three Sundays each month.

How will this salad and bread, as well as an entrée once a month, be paid for, you ask? Donations of a couple of "dollars from diners" each week. We'll accumulate the money we need for this service.

Hospitality has a bowl for voluntary contributions, but we'd like to ask for regular, weekly donations from those who can afford it.

What I do for the Moore family is put the whole amount of our monthly donation in on the first Sunday, then I don't have to think about it every Sunday. That might work for you. Or you might wish to chuck in your bucks weekly.

If everyone who could made this small contribution, we could supplement the entrees our volunteers bring in. If this doesn't work, we'll have to find an alternative to serving the lunches we provide.

Can you do that? Can you help us fund our food and relieve some of the load on our volunteer cooks?



International Rescue Committee

WELCOME CENTER
Call for volunteers!



The Welcome Center is looking for weekly volunteers to support asylum seeking families.

KITCHEN TEAM 	INTAKE TEAM 	TRANSPORT TEAM 
DONATION TEAM 	MEDICAL TEAM 	CHILD CARE 
RECEPTION TEAM 	<p>If you're already an IRC volunteer, you can become a Welcome Center volunteer! There are many teams you can sign up to help with- what is your passion?</p>	

To become an IRC volunteer assisting asylum seekers in Arizona, apply at bit.ly/WelcomeCenterVolunteer

Solar Panels Carbon Offset

The *Enphase Energy* solar panels installed on our WVUUC sanctuary roof are reducing our carbon footprint:

Your Carbon Offset for this month: 1,558 lbs

You have offset the equivalent of: 18 Trees



February Financial Highlights

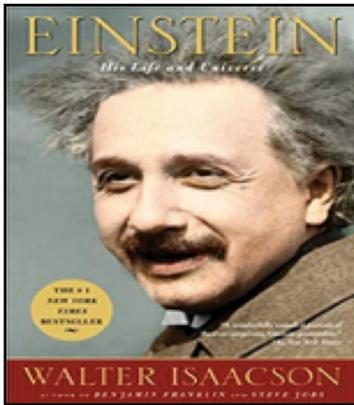
Bank Mortgage	\$956
Member Mortgage	\$2,339
Electric	\$72
Prop/Liab. Insurance	\$198
Salaries/Wages	\$345
Total expenses	\$4,167
Pledge income	\$4,703
Garage Sale	\$568
Sunday plate	\$1,004
Total income	\$6,350

To my fellow West Valley UU members: Unfortunately, most of our major expenses (like the mortgages) will need to be paid during this time of Sunday service suspension. Please remember to continue your pledge payments during this time. If you could mail them to the church, I will deposit them in the bank. Also, I will try to get your periodic pledge statement out to you soon to make sure the church books agree with your records. Thank you!

Mark Oelerking
WVUUC Treasurer

Media Review

Isaacson, W. (2008). *Einstein: His life and universe*. New York: Simon and Schuster.



Reviewed by David Moore

Walter Isaacson's fascinating biography, *Einstein: His Life and Universe*, connects Albert Einstein's scientific breakthroughs with his complex life. It recounts personal and public events that range from Einstein abandoning his daughter, to forsaking pacifism for nuclear weaponry, to being offered the presidency of Israel.

While reading about Einstein's scientific accomplishments, I found myself drawn to the ways he reconciled science and religion. As he noted, "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind."

Einstein's status as a theoretical physicist is iconic. His theory of general relativity altered linear, Newtonian conceptions of motion, space, and time. His calculation of energy and matter's interchangeability, $E=mc^2$, is the world's best known equation.

He received a Nobel Prize for explaining how particles – not waves -- of light produced electrical currents. And he created a statistical model of random action which showed that atoms and molecules actually exist.

These discoveries paved the way for nuclear power, solar power, GPS systems, and laser devices. They pointed toward black holes and a consistently expanding universe.

To me, Einstein's approach to science is as remarkable as his scientific accomplishments. For instance, he embraced creative imagery, contending that "Imagination is more important than knowledge." He relied on thought experiments more than laboratory research to grasp fundamental ideas.

At one point, he imagined people emptying their pockets in elevators speeding up through the void of space. This helped him establish the equivalence of acceleration and gravitation, a key aspect of his general relativity theory.

Einstein set out to identify nature's most basic principles. According to him, "The supreme task of the physicist is the search for those most general, elementary laws from which the world picture is to be obtained through pure deduction."

Along this line, Einstein spent most of his later years at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study trying to forge a unified field theory. He wanted to specify how electromagnetism and gravity are aspects of a single structure.

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Media Review

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He wanted to explain how the subatomic and interstellar are fundamentally interrelated. Unfortunately, neither he nor anyone else to date has produced such a grand theory.

Isaacson shows Einstein occasionally fitting God and religion into his scientific thinking. For example, Einstein revealed that "When I am judging a theory, I ask myself whether, if I were God, would I have arranged the world in such a way."

When quantum theorists claimed that atomic particles' movements could be described only in terms of probabilities, Einstein famously retorted, "God does not play dice with the universe."

Despite his references to God, Einstein rejected conventional religion. He embraced his Jewish ancestry and culture but did not practice Judaism. He never joined a religious group. He listed his religion as "none," "agnostic," or – my favorite -- "Mosaic" on official forms.

To Einstein God was the impersonal natural order that governs the universe, not an anthropomorphic Judeo-Christian

deity messing with humanity. As he put it, "I believe in Spinoza's God who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of what exists, not in a God who concerns himself with the fates and actions of human beings."

Einstein had unorthodox religious feelings as well as beliefs. He explained that "If something is in me which can be called religious then it is the unbounded admiration for the structure of the world so far as our science can reveal it." Furthermore, "What separates me from most so-called atheists is a feeling of utter humility toward the unattainable secrets of the harmony of the cosmos."

Commentators have said Einstein held a *night-sky* religious philosophy, what we sense when we gaze at the Milky Way and ponder our place in the universe. I like to think of his religious outlook as *cosmic*.

In the end, my core takeaway from *Einstein* is that he was a scientific genius filled with reverence for the universe. What a combination!



Web Presence



Go to this online calendar for WVUU events:

westvalleyuu.org/events/calendar/



Keep up with WVUU church and member news, post comments, and share articles and photos with friends at these websites:

Facebook Group
facebook.com/groups/wvuuc

Facebook Fan Page
facebook.com/WestValleyUnitarianUniversalistChurch

Pin and browse UU-related visuals at this site:

pinterest.com/pin/242772236133017855/

UU Principles and Sources



Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote seven principles:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and society at large;
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all; and
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Unitarian Universalist principles are drawn from six sources:

1. Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
2. Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
3. Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
4. Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
5. Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit; and
6. Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.